

The Parish of St. John the Evangelist Newbury

Parochial Church Council Meeting held in-person on Thursday 23rd November 2023 beginning at 7.30pm

Present:

The Revd. Gary Collins – Chair
David Oats (DO) – Churchwarden
Alison Foulkes (AF) – Churchwarden
Simon Brown (SB) – PCC Secretary
Kim Slade (KS) – Hon. Treasurer

Also in attendance:

Melanie Brown (MAB), Christopher Sears (CS), Aeron Slade (AS),

1	Opening Prayer & Welcome		
2	Apologies for Absence & Any Other Business Andy Grace, Margaret Baker, Jeremy Wright, Andrew Kingston, Stephen Kerry - AOB AK to be asked to update PCC photos.		
3	Correspondence Olive Maines (Minutes)+ website update. Margaret Baker (various)		
4	Minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 21 st September 2023. The minutes were approved by the PCC with AF proposing & KS seconding.		
5	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes. No matters arising, apart from those addressed in sections below. Thanks to MAB.		
6	PCC – Safeguarding Update SK – provided email confirming no safeguarding issues		
	Action: SK to send link to Revd Gary/MAB for distribution (a training list to do with Safeguarding Sunday)		
7	<p>PCC - H&S Update MB contributed via email.</p> <p>I have not had any Health and Safety issues raised although I have noticed that the door at the east end does not open fully following the refit of the mat and surround. I dare say it might be possible to force it if an evacuation was required but it does not easily allow access to a wheelchair now which is a shame.</p> <p>Revd Gary updated that the floor has raised, some has been shaved, swollen slightly and this will be replaced (needs to be accessible).</p> <p>Glass case containing the model of Church is cracked. Revd Gary updated that it has been moved, DO measured up for a replacement – hope to replace soon.</p>		
8	Deanery Update AS reported from the last Deanery meeting. The Deanery did not confirm the parish share distribution. KS updated that Newbury S benefit share has gone up 7% YOY split evenly between St George’s and St John’s. Revd Gary updated this was agreed by the priests and will be confirmed back to Synod. AS updated that one church responded that the measurement should be reviewed, and we are still running with a Deanery Secretary vacancy. CS asked if the 7% was because of a longstanding delay in increase, but AS confirmed was YOY. AS things that if we get similar increase next, plus a rise in paid diocese positions then the cost becomes unsustainable. KS asked what’s the process for the Diocese payments to the Deanery, AS and SB to raise at the next Deanery meeting.		
9	Vicars’s Report: Revd Gary - Now entering a very busy time in the run up to Christmas. Lots of good things to look forward to. The idea of presence in the community and the quality and quantity of outreach in addition to the Sunday services. Our task is to outreach to the community. I ask myself the qualitative difference between 50 attending services or 1 sitting quietly. The giving of Soup is as important. The holding of the sacrament is important, but it manifests itself in different ways, and through the many things we do this also is part of the role of the church. Relish the opportunity for those who come to church at this time.		

	CS linked back to the Parish Share payment, how can they reflect the wider work of the church, by just counting attendance on a Sunday in June? Be of good heart and be encouraged. KS asked for an update on the Christmas Fayre (Gary updated we have 16 tables fully booked but advertising needs to be increased). Revd Gary updated we are repeating a hot choc gathering for children combined St Nics and St Johns, combined with being in the Newbury Advent Callender produced by Magdalene.		
10	Financial Report: Background spreadsheet forwarded to the PCC. YTD down £23k of which £8k is Boiler or Organ works so deficit is £15k YTD (inc. Sept). Quinquennial fees paid. Expect next organ and boiler spends will be next year (so carried over). Gas and Elec now on fixed rate tariff (Total Energy via Parish Buying Scheme (from 1 st October). Revd Gary thanked Kim for her work, DO also appreciated the clear way its presented.		
11	iCAP: AS updated the possibility of a grant from Benefact (the Churches Trust). Revd Gary updated the drawings are about to go out to DAC and then (subject to approve based on the final drawings – previous draft drawings were approved) then to 3 contractors before March '24 next year. DO updated that appointment for moving the electricity meter will be booked shortly and paid for in advance. Do updated that payment needs to be paid in advanced £2.4k to move the supply from one side of the porch to the other. KS asked that DO update her with details so payment can be made. Do asked KS to set up payment soonest. AS asked if payment came out of dedicated iCAP account and asked if we have been spending out of normal PCC accounts, KS answered yes but been transferring. AS reminded, we should trigger match funding. SB asked when does planning permission run out. AF updated March '24.		
12	Boiler update – 7 invites gone out, 1 refused. 4 now booked in from interested contractors to provide quotes for the new boiler. DO updated that we would look also maybe to put some panels on the roof as this would cut the cost of the electricity bill (subject to permission) – this could be an add on project. DO updated that the advice from the DAC is changing. AS suggested, we bring up at the Deanery Synod meeting that to achieve carbon neutral, we may have to change the external fabric of the church.		
13	Organ Updates CS – DAC Organ advisers disagree with the Organ Builders. CS updated that he would review with the Organ Builders the work proposed, split the work, and see what can wait. Organ advisors have approved of what has been done and it's been well received. Grants can only be gained with a faculty. CS suggested getting a second quote from a different organ builder. Revd Gary asked if we could write in and get clarity. CS updated next steps is the organ tuning next month will principate a conversation.		
14	New Dishwasher – Following a couple of requests for a dishwasher. AF agreed and recommended an industrial dishwasher rather than a domestic dishwasher. AF updated the PCC with details of a recommended dishwasher, Water company approved (WRAS). AF suggested a figure of around £1.5k + installed + stand. AF updated 90,120,180 second cycles, quick. DO recommended industrial. AS recommended, we don't go down food hygiene but download and print off a checklist. DO suggested that washing by hand may be a good thing. KS suggested we could link having a dishwasher with room hire and could ask customers for their view. DO reminded that setting up is not quite as simple and we would need some work to install. Sb suggested we should get clarity over the prices and look at install costs. CS also suggested how often are we using dryer towels which can be a problem. AF responded absolutely the cloth issue can be an issue, and we could tighten up on that (AS updated they use blue roll in Sea Cadets). Revd Gary suggested could we use domestic. AF said not. DO updated you could fill it with just cups and mugs so he believes it needs to be commercial and the speed of the unit is of benefit. Revd Gary recommended we get a plumber in to investigate. AF will get a quote finalised and present to PCC. AS suggested Adexa.co.uk. AF also will check with the discount options. Review the cost of a plumber to come in and install.		
15	Worship – Children's inclusion in Worship Revd Gary – this is ongoing. Maybe an approach in the coming year is to have an all-age service consistently once a month, shaping the liturgy as appropriate		
16	Greening Group – climate emergency: We don't have the detail which will be provided before the next meeting. Lots of groups have declared a climate emergency, it is just a way to say we are doing what we intend. By doing this we are taking this seriously. CS suggested it should be acknowledging not declaring.		

	One of the factors to get an Eco church award would be to declare. KS suggested updating what actions we are taking – list the green items, this is more important. Revd Gary updated that consensus is that we are heading for a difficulty situation, and this is a way for us to get on board and achieve recognition. SB is concerned and not quite of a campaigning mind. Revd Gary will ask for the information to forward to the PCC.		
17	Lighting up the church: Revd Gary updated that SB recommended at the last SFC we should light up the outside of the church, because of the significant tension in the world this year. AS also mentioned, he had met someone recently who mentioned our church as the one to light up. Could be ‘Peace on Earth’ Supplier for (c £850). KS reminded us that we did not do it for cost of living, but people would look at it as a sign of hope. SB asked the PCC to vote for lighting up the church. AF and CS, DO and MAB concerned over the costs. PCC voted unanimously yes, for one night. ‘Peace on Earth’ With Revd Gary to see if we can secure some sponsorship or discount if possible (if not still to go ahead) Revd Gary also suggested knitted snowflakes sewn onto netting for next year (as a community event) – cost to forecast £330.		
18	School connection – AF updated that St Johns School wish to decorate a tree on the morning of Wednesday 6 th December.		
19	Any Other Business: No Other business.		

Closing Benediction (meeting closed at 21:25)

Date & time of next meetings: SFC 18/01/24 7:30pm (Zoom) | PCC 30/01/24 7:30pm (in-person)